

(Breakthrough, Summer 1988)

METAMUSIC® IN THE DENTAL CHAIR

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In January of 1987, The Monroe Institute provided our dental office with ten Hemi-Sync® Metamusic tapes for use in our dental practice—specifically, for patients who faced long appointments. We were curious to see if the Metamusic would assist patients in relaxing during their dental appointments, and perhaps help with pain control.

We had Metamusic *Random Access, Eddys, Back Room, Modem, Highland Ring, Midsummer Night, Trailing Edge, Outreach, East by West, and Sam & George* reproduced onto a four channel tape player which is controlled by each patient at the chair. The patient has a channel changer and earphones, similar to an airline music system. The patient can control both volume and channel desired.

We first had Metamusic programmed onto one channel and regular music programmed onto the other three channels. We found that patients preferred the music they were familiar with, and did not use the Metamusic tape, even when we mentioned that that channel had music which may help them to relax. We then had a tape made with Metamusic on all four channels, and told patients that we were trying a new type of tape with music that we hoped would help them to relax. We asked for their comments and feedback.

It is interesting to note that the tape system also has an option to play whatever tape is in the player out loud, throughout the entire treatment area. At the time we were first experimenting with the tape, we happened to have it on for everyone to hear just before a staff meeting. A new associate, who was not familiar with our experiment, was in the back. She came to the front and asked what kind of music was playing. She said that she felt very irritated by the music for about fifteen minutes and was about to find someone to turn it off, when all of a sudden, she felt completely relaxed. We explained to her what we hoped to achieve by using the Metamusic, and she now uses it with certain patients.

Each channel was programmed with Metamusic in varied sequences. Patients could listen to the sequence on a channel, or switch to any of the three other channels if they preferred a different mood.

We have now used the system for a little over a year, and will continue to do so. We offer it to the majority of our patients who are having long appointments, and both Dr. Paradise and the technical assistants feel it helps to relax the patients. Patient comments range from "I can't believe I fell asleep in the dental chair," (this from a physician and an interior designer) to "I feel more relaxed, but I can still hear the drill." Most patients comment on the "New Age" music

format. Since relaxation and pain control are difficult to measure, we can assess our results only by our "sense" of a patient's response and by their subjective feedback. In some cases, they feel more relaxed than we assess, and in others, we feel they are more relaxed than they feel.

We will continue to use Hemi-Sync in our dental office since it is our conclusion that both relaxation and pain control are benefited by the music. We thank The Monroe Institute for sharing this system with our office.

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